

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of shaping a spring blank to form a shaped spring, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) placing a spring blank at an opening of an elongated slot;
- (b) placing a spacer member adjacent to said spring blank; and
- (c) pushing the spacer member against the spring blank to urge both the spring blank and the spacer member through the opening and into said elongated slot and cause the spring blank to wrap around an outer surface of the spacer member, wherein the spring blank conforms to a shape of the outer surface of the spacer member to form a shaped spring.

2. A method according to claim 1, further comprising:
repeating said steps (a) to (c) until a desired number of shaped springs and spacer members are alternately positioned in a row in said elongated slot.

3. A method according to claim 1, wherein said pushing step comprises pushing the spacer member against the spring blank with a tip of a user's finger.

4. A method according to claim 1, wherein said pushing step comprises pushing the spacer member against spring blank with a rod-like member.

5. A spring shaping apparatus adapted to form shaped springs, store the formed shaped springs and load the formed shaped springs into a shaped spring cavity to form a shaped spring assembly, the apparatus comprising:

- a base member having a longitudinally extending slot which is closed at a first end and open at a second end, said slot being adapted to hold a plurality of shaped springs therein with a plurality of spacer members being provided between the shaped springs; and

a platform extending from said opening at the second end of the slot, said platform being sized to hold a spring blank and a spacer member thereon in a position which permits a user to push a surface of the spacer member in a first direction against the spring blank to urge the spring blank and the spacer member into the slot, such that the spring blank wraps around the surface of the spacer member and forms a shaped spring in said slot;

said platform being further adapted to hold a shaped spring cavity in a loading position on said platform, such that a shaped spring cavity can be placed in said loading position on said platform when a desired number of shaped springs with spacer members there-between are inserted into said slot, to permit a loading of a shaped spring from said slot into said cavity to form a shaped spring assembly.

6. A shaping and loading apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said platform comprises a pair of positioning protruding members which are adapted to hold said shaped spring cavity in said loading position on said platform.

7. A shaping and loading apparatus according to claim 5, wherein each of said spacer members, while in said slot, are adapted to be moved in a second direction opposite to said first direction against an adjacent shaped spring to load a shaped spring into a shaped spring cavity on said platform.

8. A method of forming, storing, and loading shaped springs to form a shaped spring assembly, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) placing a spring blank on a platform of a base member and adjacent to an opening of an elongated slot of the base member, a length of said spring blank being greater than a width of said opening;

(b) placing a spacer member on said platform and adjacent to said spring blank, such that said opening is on a first side of said spring blank and said spacer member is on a second side of said spring blank which is opposite to said first side;

(c) pushing the spacer member in a first direction against the second side of said spring blank to urge both the spring blank and the spacer member through the opening and into said slot and cause the spring blank to wrap around an outer surface of the spacer member, wherein the spring blank conforms to a shape of the outer surface of the spacer member to form a shaped spring;

(d) repeating said steps (a) to (c) until a desired number of shaped springs and spacer members are alternately positioned in a row in said elongated slot;

(e) pushing a first spacer member in said slot which is closest to the opening in a second direction which is opposite to the first direction and out of said slot;

(f) placing an empty shaped spring cavity on said platform of said base member; and

(g) pushing a next spacer member in said slot in said second direction opposite the first direction, to push an adjacent shaped spring toward said cavity and load the adjacent shaped spring into said cavity to form a shaped spring assembly.

9. A method according to claim 8, wherein said pushing step in said first direction or said second direction comprises pushing the spacer member with a tip of a user's finger.

10. A method according to claim 8, wherein said pushing step in said first direction or said second direction comprises pushing the spacer member with a rod-like member.

11. A spring shaping tool adapted to form shaped springs and load the formed shaped springs into a shaped spring cavity to form a shaped spring assembly, the shaping and loading tool comprising:

a base member having a slot which is adapted to hold a plurality of shaped springs therein with a plurality of spacer members being provided between the shaped springs; and

a platform extending from said base member, said platform being sized to hold a spring blank and a spacer member thereon in a position which permits a user to push a surface of the spacer member in a first direction against the spring blank, so that the spring blank and the spacer member are urged into said slot to cause the spring blank to wrap around the surface of the spacer member and form a shaped spring;

said platform being further adapted to hold a shaped spring cavity to permit a loading of a shaped spring from said slot into said cavity when a desired number of shaped springs are inserted into said slot, to form a shaped spring assembly.